

<b>DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION</b>		Number: 1043-046
SUBJECT: Advisory Committee on Small Farms	DATE: November 16, 1999	
	OPI: Office of the Chief Economist	

1 PURPOSE

a This regulation establishes the Advisory Committee on Small Farms (Committee). The purpose of the Committee is to gather and analyze information regarding small farms and ranches within the United States and its Territories. The Committee will recommend to the Secretary of Agriculture actions to take to enhance the viability and economic livelihood of small farms and ranches within the United States.

b The Committee is in the public interest and within the duties and responsibilities of the Department of Agriculture (USDA). Establishment of the Committee also ensures the continued consideration and implementation of the recommendations made by the National Commission on Small Farms in its report, "A Time to Act."

2 SPECIAL INSTRUCTION

a This regulation will expire two years from the date of filing.

b Unless renewed, the Committee will terminate two years from the date of filing.

3 OFFICERS AND MEMBERSHIP

a The Committee will have 19 members, one of whom will serve as Chair and be appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture and one of whom will serve as Vice-Chair as appointed by the Committee. Members will represent small farms, ranches, and woodlot owners and will represent the diverse interests that USDA programs serve, including but not limited to, finance, commerce, conservation, cooperatives, nonprofit organizations, rural communities, academia, State, local governments, women and minorities, farmworkers, and other interests as the Secretary determines.

b USDA will follow equal opportunity practices in making appointments to the Committee. To ensure that recommendations of the Committee take into account the needs of the diverse groups USDA serves, membership will include, to the extent practicable, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.

c The Secretary of Agriculture shall make all appointments to the Committee and the members will serve at the Secretary's discretion.

d Members will serve two-year terms. In the event of a vacancy, the Secretary will appoint a new member as appropriate and subject to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

e The Committee may establish subcommittees as it determines necessary subject to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act and the approval of the Chair or the Chair's designee.

#### 4 DUTIES

a The duties of the Committee are solely advisory. The Committee will monitor government and private sector actions, policy, and program proposals that relate to small farms, ranches, and woodlots, including limited-resource farms, ranches, and woodlots; and evaluate the impact such actions and proposals may have upon the viability and growth of small farms, ranches, and woodlots.

b The Committee will review USDA programs and strategies to implement small farm policy advise the Secretary on actions to strengthen USDA programs and evaluate other approaches that the Committee would deem advisable or which the Secretary of Agriculture or the Director of Sustainable Development and Small Farms may request the committee to consider.

c The Committee will advise the Secretary through an annual report and other means as necessary and appropriate.

#### 5 ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS

a Committee members will serve without pay. Reimbursement of travel expenses and per diem cost shall be made to Committee members who would be unable to attend Committee meetings without such reimbursement.

b Annual operating costs are estimated to be \$150,000, including 0.5 staff year.

#### 6 NUMBER AND FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

a The Committee will meet as necessary to perform its functions as determined by the Chair and within budgetary constraints.

b The Committee will hold at least one public meeting per year, and conduct working sessions and teleconference calls as determined by the Chair.

c The Committee may hold additional public meetings, forums and/or hearings to solicit public comments as necessary and appropriate within budgetary constraints.

d The designated Federal official will be responsible for the prior approval of the agenda for all Committee meetings and notification of Committee meetings and agendas in the Federal Register.

e The designated Federal official will be responsible for taking and maintaining the minutes of the Committee meetings.

7       REPORTS

The Committee shall submit an annual report to the Secretary of Agriculture.

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